

## God Will Reveal His Will, Part 2 - Acts 15:27-35 – May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008

- Acts 15 is one of the most, if not the most, important chapters in the book of Acts because of the threat the early church is facing.
- A conference was held at the church in Jerusalem in order to address a legal requirement imposed by the Jews on Gentile believers.
- A consensus is reached by this Jerusalem counsel, and the decision is made to write a letter and have it delivered to the churches.
- Here's the question: "how did they know what God's will was?" "In what ways did God reveal His will to them in order to resolve this?"

- How did they know that it was God's will to write a letter?
- How did they know what God's will was to say in the letter?
- How did they know who God would have them send with the letter?
- How did they know God's will as to who should receive the letter?

- 1. He uses the church (Verse 22a)** They agreed, as a church, with the decision to choose men to send with Paul and Barnabas.
- 2. He uses the leadership (Verse 22b)** They chose Barsabbas and Silas because they were leaders among the brothers.
- 3. He uses the bold (Verses 23-24)** They send a gracious, yet bold letter to confront the false teachers and their false teaching.
- 4. He uses the risk takers (Verses 25-26)** They write in the letter that those they sent were men who risked their lives for the Lord.

### 5. He uses the confirmations (Verse 27)

27 Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas to confirm by word of mouth what we are writing.

v27 They tell them in the letter, that in the presence of two witnesses, Barsabbas and Silas, their word of mouth testimony confirms this.

**Deuteronomy 19:15b** ... A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. NIV

"The Jewish law said, 'In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' These two accredited messengers would be able to tell the whole story of the Jerusalem conference, show how the decision was made, and show the genuineness of the warmth contained in the letter."  
John Phillips "Exploring Acts" Volume 2 p300

### 6. He uses the Holy Spirit (Verses 28-29)

28 It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: 29 You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality. You will do well to avoid these things. Farewell.

v28 They tell them that "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" to not burden you with anything beyond this list of requirements.

v29 The list they were to avoid included "food sacrificed to idols, strangled animals meat, and sexual immorality to not stumble the Jews."

"God guides through the gifts of the Spirit. Earlier in this chapter, there was much debate and discussion. Suddenly, James the Camel-kneed stood up, and as he spoke, an interesting thing happened. Everyone in the room melted into unity and agreement. The same is true for us. There are times when, during an endless dialogue or discussion, someone suddenly says something that settles not only in your mind, but deep within your heart—and you know it's the Lord, speaking through a word of wisdom. I hope when you're struggling with finding God's will for your life, you avail yourself of settings where words of wisdom, knowledge, and prophecy are being exercised. Frequently, that's how the Lord speaks most clearly."

Jon Courson

### 7. He uses the prophetic (Verses 30-32)

30 The men were sent off and went down to Antioch, where they gathered the church together and delivered the letter. 31 The people read it and were glad for its encouraging message. 32 Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.

v30-31 When they arrive in Antioch they are received with a warm welcome and after reading the letter were encouraged by its message.

v32 Barsabas and Silas, both of whom were prophets, said much to them to comfort, encourage and strengthen the brothers there.

"And a great comfort it was, for the saints were confirmed in their freedom from the Jewish yoke, those who troubled them were silenced, and the Gentiles were still further encouraged to receive the gospel. The Antioch Christians had done well to seek a settlement of a vexed question."  
Charles Spurgeon

### 8. He uses the Word (Verses 33-35)

33 After spending some time there, they were sent off by the brothers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them. 34 (But it seemed good to Silas to remain there.) 35 But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.

v33 After they had spent some time there, they were sent off to return back to those who had sent them in Jerusalem.

v34 Wasn't in some manuscripts, but some translations will have in parenthesis: "But it seemed good to Silas to remain there."

v35 Paul and Barnabas also remain in Antioch where they and many others "taught and preached the word of the Lord."

**Psalm 119:105** Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path. NIV